

Final Report: 1999 Westchester County Golf Course IPM Demonstration Project

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Abstract: The Westchester County Golf Course IPM Project seeks to demonstrate the efficacy of regular monitoring, spot treatment, biocontrols, less toxic insecticides and other techniques of integrated pest management on county golf courses characterized by high traffic and low budgets.

Background and Justification: Although more than 50 private clubs serve wealthy golfers, a 1995 National Golf Foundation study found an unmet annual demand for 500,000 rounds of golf in Westchester. County golf course personnel are under intense pressure to maximize usage and minimize pest-related damage, downtime and expenses. As a 7/25/97 article from *The Reporter Dispatch* noted, "All five courses were built before 1931. That means they have tight fairways, antiquated sprinkler systems, and very small tee areas that are difficult to maintain under heavy public use. While the average private club in the area hosts 22,262 rounds per year, ...the average was **54,822 rounds** per [county] course in 1995." In the face of insufficient time, staff, reference materials and training opportunities, the county's golf course personnel fight hard to implement IPM on poorly constructed courses.

Golf course personnel are caught between golfers who expect PGA conditions and citizens who believe that pesticides and fertilizers are dangerous sources of pollution. Concern over potential pesticide links to cancer led to the 1996 passage of a new law requiring the adoption of IPM techniques in all Westchester County facilities. NYPIRG's recent "Plagued by Pesticides" report ranked Westchester fourth highest in pounds and eighth highest in gallons of pesticides used among New York State's counties in 1997. Several communities have passed the so-called "Sunset Law" and strong forces are pushing for this three-year phase out of pesticides throughout the county.

For a printed copy of the entire report, please contact the NYS IPM office at:

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